



JUNE 1998

Louisiana COAST LINES

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Office of Coastal Restoration and Management

Meet the Staff -- Part VI

The function of the **Ecosystem Management Section (EMS)** of the Coastal Restoration Division (CRD) is to develop and implement ecosystem management plans for the coastal region. Ecosystem management refers to a proactive approach to coastal restoration in the context of the multiple coastal uses such as fisheries, transportation, flood control, navigation, oil and gas, water supply, agriculture, forestry, and other socio-economic, industrial, and recreational uses. Coastal restoration activities should maximize the diversity and extent of coastal habitats while minimizing adverse impacts to coastal users. This section is heavily involved in the planning and implementation of the initiative known as Coast 2050. Coast 2050 is a joint planning undertaking that involves the public, parish governments, the Louisiana Wetland Conservation and Restoration Authority, the Coastal Wetland Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (Breaux Act) Task Force, and the DNR Coastal Zone Management Authority. This partnership has embarked on the development of a strategic plan aimed at protecting and sustaining our state's coastal resources for future generations in a

manner consistent with the welfare of the people.

The EMS section currently has 8 personnel with a total of 10 positions. Lawrence "Phil" Pittman, Natural Resources Geoscience Program Manager, oversees the section. Phil is responsible for allocating resources and project responsibilities to staff; developing section-level budget; determining staff and contractual needs; requisitioning supplies and equipment; providing quality assurance for the section; approving all field trips, meetings, and seminars; holding weekly section-level meetings; and performing employee evaluations. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from Southeastern Louisiana University, with an emphasis on Wildlife Management. Phil's areas of expertise include environmental assessments, environmental impact statements, state and federal permitting procedures, local coastal programs, field investigations, land loss and erosion—causes and effects, and ecosystem management. Phil and his wife have one son. He enjoys hunting, fishing, golf, hiking, tennis, softball, and scuba diving. Phil has worked at DNR for 20 years.

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Charles R. “Chuck” Villarrubia is a Natural Resources Geoscience Supervisor. He received his B.S. degree in Forestry from LSU (magna cum laude) and his M.S. degree in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Tennessee. Chuck supervises three staff who oversee the Caernarvon, Davis Pond, and Coast 2050 projects. Chuck’s hobbies include kayaking and hiking. He has worked at DNR for one year.

Lawrence B. “Bren” Haase is a Natural Resources Geoscience Specialist II. He earned his B.S. degree in Marine Biology from Auburn University and his M.S. degree in Oceanography & Coastal Sciences from LSU. Bren is a member of the Coast 2050 Region 1 Regional Planning Team (RPT) which consists of the area in and around the Lake Pontchartrain Basin and Lake Borgne area. He is married and enjoys hunting, fishing, and outdoor activities. Bren has worked at DNR for almost one year.

Bryan Piazza is a Natural Resources Geoscience Specialist II. He received his B.S. degree in Wildlife Management and Biology from the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point in May of 1993, and his M.S. degree in Wildlife from LSU in May of 1997. Bryan is currently working on the Coast 2050 plan. He is involved in the Region 2 RPT which consists of Breton Sound, Barataria Basin, and the Mississippi Delta. He enjoys hunting, fishing, and roller hockey. Bryan has worked at DNR for almost one year.

Steven Gammill is a Natural Resources Geoscience Supervisor. He received his B.S. degree in Biology from Greensboro College in 1987 and his M.S. degree in Marine Biology (with a concentration in Coastal Biology) from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in 1990. Steven develops and implements ecosystem management plans for the Louisiana coastal region west of Bayou Lafourche. He is also the Study Manager for the Barrier Shoreline Feasibility Study and Hydrologic Investigation of the Chenier Plain. Steven is married and enjoys sailing and harmonica playing. He has worked at DNR for seven years.

Catherine “Cathy” Grouchy is a Natural Resources Geoscience Specialist III. She received her B.S. degree in Wildlife & Fisheries with a minor in Zoology and her M.S. degree in Wildlife Science with a minor in Experimental Statistics from LSU. Cathy develops and implements scientifically and technically sound ecosystem management plans to create, restore, protect, and enhance Louisiana’s renewable coastal resources. She enjoys hunting,

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CRD's Ecosystem Management Section: L-R, Standing, CRD Administrator Bill Good, Bren Haase, Paul Clifton, Bryan Piazza, Cathy Grouchy. Kneeling, Phil Pittman, Steve Gammill, Chuck Villarrubia.



fishing, camping, and scuba diving. Cathy has worked at DNR for one year.

Paul Clifton is a Natural Resources Geoscience Specialist III. He earned his B.S. degree in Forestry from Louisiana Tech University in 1982, and his M.S. in Forestry from LSU in 1986. He also completed some coursework in the plant physiology program in LSU's Horticulture Department's Ph.D. program. Paul is married with two children. He enjoys gardening, golf, music, writing, camping, and fishing. Paul has worked at DNR for 6 ½ years.

Greg Snedden is a Natural Resources Geoscience Specialist II. He received his B.S. degree in 1993 from the University of Illinois in Ecology, Ethnology, & Evolution, with an emphasis in Aquatic Ecology. He received his M.S. degree from LSU in 1997 with a major in Fisheries

Science. Greg participated in the Region 4 Planning Team for Coast 2050 and assists in the development of the Study to Characterize the Hydrology of the Chenier Plain. He enjoys fishing, hunting, backpacking, and mountain biking. Greg began working at DNR eight months ago.

Melissa "Missy" Kish is a Student Worker for the Ecosystem Management Section. She is a graduate of Scotlandville Magnet High School. She spent one semester at Northeast Louisiana University and is currently a student at LSU. Missy assists with general office duties such as copying, filing, typing, and computer work. She runs various errands for her supervisor and the section. Missy also assists with mailings and various projects. She started working at DNR 6 months ago.

DNR's Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund

The purpose of the Department of Natural Resources's (DNR) Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund is to provide compensation or reimbursement in the most timely manner permissible to qualifying Louisiana commercial fishermen for damage to vessels or gear caused by encounters with obstructions located underwater in state waters of the Coastal Zone. All revenues for this program are derived from an assessment on holders of state mineral leases and grantees of pipeline rights-of-way located within the Coastal Zone.

Act 447 of 1981 authorized a study to locate and chart underwater obstructions in not more than three geological areas known to be hazardous because of the obstructions. These areas were identified as

Cameron Parish, Barataria Bay in Jefferson and Plaquemines parishes, and Eloi Bay in St. Bernard Parish. Maps of these areas showing the locations of the obstructions were distributed to various parties.

The first step in making a claim is to call DNR at (504) 342-0122 and report the incident. You have 30 days from the date of the incident in which to report the incident to DNR, who will assign you a claim number and mail you a claim form. In order to assist in the fast processing of your claim, follow these detailed instructions. A copy of the instructions will also be included with the claim form when it is sent to you. You will then be given 60 days in which to get all information to DNR.

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Please be sure to include all of the following information to assure prompt processing of your claim:

A copy of your commercial fishing license that can be easily read.

Loran Readings. This must be at least 5 digits (46868.50 & 27732.45 or 46868 & 27732). If your reading does not look like this example, it is not the information we need. Instead, give us a very detailed description of where and how we can locate the obstruction so that we can mark it on our maps.

The claim form must be completely filled out, signed and notarized (with a raised seal). Please do not send a copy.

Statements from Witnesses. If the witness statements are not made on the claim form, each witness statement must be signed and notarized (with a raised seal). Please do not send copies.

Receipts for Damage. Receipts for the repair or replacement of the damage must be a COMPLETELY filled out receipt. It must have the full name, date, address, and telephone number of the seller printed or neatly written on it. It should also have the claimant's name and/or address on it. If a claimant makes his/her own nets/equipment, receipts for materials used to make/repair the damaged nets/equipment will be needed.

Receipts for Old Gear. Receipts for damaged gear must be a completely filled out receipt. It must have the date, full name, address, and telephone number of the seller printed or written neatly on the receipt. It should also have the claimant's name and/or address on it. If a claimant makes his/her own nets/equipment, receipts for mat-

erials used to make/repair the damaged nets/equipment will be needed. If a boat has direct damage, a photograph of the boat, showing the damage, and a photograph of the registration number and name (if named) of the boat will be needed. If the motor has been damaged, please send photographs of the motor **still attached to the boat** or a photograph of the serial number of the motor with receipt showing the same.

Registration Papers. A legible copy of the registration papers of the boat.

Tax Forms. Send a completed and signed copy of the previous year's 1040 income tax forms and Schedule C must be provided. For example, if the accident happened in May of 1998, then forms for 1997 would be needed.

Pictures. Pictures of damage are necessary when there is damage to the boat or motor.

We must be able to read all documents. In addition, your claim number must be written on each document we have asked for and that you send regarding your claim. If you have any questions, contact the Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund at (504) 342-0122.

Reminder: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MAY A CLAIM FORM BE PROCESSED IF IT IS POSTMARKED MORE THAN 90 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF THE INCIDENT.

It is necessary that all claims be investigated prior to approval for payment.



Hanchey Assumes Duties of DNR Deputy Secretary



DNR's Deputy Secretary James "Randy" Hanchey.

On April 13, James "Randy" Hanchey became Deputy Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. He replaced Dr. Steve Mathies, who returned to the New Orleans District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Jack Caldwell, Secretary of DNR, said he welcomes Hanchey with confidence in the leadership role he will provide to the agency. Prior to taking this position at DNR, Hanchey served as director of engineering at the Mississippi Valley Division of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg, MS.

Hanchey was born in Kinder, LA and is a graduate of LaGrange High

School in Lake Charles. He earned his B.S. degree in civil engineering from the University of Southwestern Louisiana in 1961 and his M.S. degree from Tulane in 1967. Hanchey also took additional graduate courses at Stanford University from 1969 to 1971.

Hanchey is a recent retiree from the Corps, where he worked from 1961 to 1998 as a civil engineer. In his role as director of engineering, he led the planning, engineering, construction, operations, and real estate activities of the Corps along the Mississippi River. He has devoted ten years to the Mississippi Valley Division of the Mississippi River Commission. Hanchey's administrative duties also included directing the Water Resources Support Center and the Institute for Water Resources at Fort Belvoir, VA from 1971 to 1989.

In January 1998, Hanchey was presented with the Army's de Fleury Medal citing his individual contribution to Army engineering. He is also the 1997 Silver Medal Award recipient of the de Fleury award administered by the U.S. Army Engineer Regiment.

Deputy Secretary Hanchey said, "I greatly appreciate the confidence Secretary Caldwell has placed in me. I am returning to Louisiana at a time when many of the DNR programs and projects are critical to the future of the state and I am ready for the challenges that are ahead of us."



SONRIS/2000 (Strategic Online Natural Resources Information System)

As the dawn of the 21st century approaches, the technology by which state agencies store and disseminate information to the public via the Internet will continue to progress. The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently implementing a Strategic Online Natural Resources Information System, also known as **SONRIS/2000** (pronounced "Sunrise 2000") that is designed to take advantage of the latest, most appropriate information technology to govern Louisiana's abundant natural resources.

This strategic system will store departmental data in a single database that is built around a relational database engine, warehousing textual data, GIS data, and electronic document images. The use of a central database will allow for total flexibility in data retrieval by many types of users employing various software products. **SONRIS/2000** will consist of a high end, robust database to provide throughput to all DNR business functions in a timely fashion, and to serve the public via Internet access of records in the public domain. This system will use fiber-optic networking, remote discrete sensing, satellite transmission data, LANDSAT images, surface water modeling, electronic document imaging, optical storage, and data distribution via the World Wide Web. The geographical information elements of the system will be structured around a suite of advanced products including

ArcView and Arc/Info, which are connected to the database via spatial techniques. Information will be available to the private and public sectors from the four main offices within DNR: the Office of the Secretary, the Office of Conservation, the Office of Mineral Resources, and the Office of Coastal Restoration and Management.

SONRIS/2000 will be built on a multi-tiered computing framework. The first tier will contain the enterprise database server, while the middle tier consists of application and specialized servers. The third tier will include end-user machines, either "thick-client" PCs running within DNR, or "thin-client", Web-browser based PCs utilizing the Internet. While there are complex, emerging technologies behind **SONRIS/2000**, the goal is to provide an interface to the end-user community with which the user feels comfortable. For example, personnel within DNR will interface with **SONRIS/2000** via the familiar Windows NT/Windows 95 graphical environment, while users on the Internet will be able to access this strategic system from the comfort of their own home.

SONRIS/2000 was envisioned by DNR to be an innovative tool for conserving and managing the natural resources of Louisiana, by forming alliances with technologically advanced organizations to implement a 21st century, state-of-the-art information system. Although still

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in the planning stage, DNR received national recognition for this innovative approach to resource management, when on April 6, 1998, **SONRIS/2000** became a part of the Smithsonian Institution's Permanent Research collection on Information Technology Innovation at the National Museum of American

History. Please join us on the sunrise of the Year 2000 and the dawn of the 21st century, when this vision of technology will become a reality, as the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources proudly unveils **SONRIS/2000**.

A Revolution In Wetlands Regulation

On May 1, 1998, the New Orleans District Corps of Engineers (Corps) announced the issuance of a "Programmatic General Permit" (PGP) for certain categories of activities occurring within the boundaries of the Louisiana Coastal Zone. Implemented on June 1, 1998, the PGP replaced the Nationwide Permits, Regional General Permits, and Letters of Permission formerly used to authorize projects having minor impacts to "special aquatic sites" such as vegetated wetlands, mudflats vegetated shallows, and sanctuaries and refuges. PGP's are types of permits that authorize projects that are also regulated by another federal, state, tribal, or local agency. In this case, the State of Louisiana, Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Division (CMD) is the other regulatory agency.

Initial attempts to craft the PGP began in 1996 when representatives of the state and federal agencies involved in the regulation of wetlands-impacting activities met to discuss ways to simplify the permitting process for applicants while maintaining or improving environmental protections. The resulting proposal was placed on public notice June 25, 1997. As

ultimately issued, the PGP establishes three categories of activities: Category I is generally activities that impact up to 0.5 acres of special aquatic sites, Category II is generally activities that impact up to two acres of tidal or three acres of non-tidal special aquatic sites (up to 3.5 acres of impact is allowed for oil and gas related activities), and a final category of projects that exceed those acreages and are excluded from consideration under the PGP. It is estimated that approximately 70% of all the applications received by CMD will be eligible for federal approval under the auspices of the PGP.

All in all, the PGP is a winning effort for everyone involved, applicants will experience fewer delays, federal agencies will be able to concentrate their efforts on projects having more significant wetland impacts, and the state and local agencies will be able to function more effectively by reducing the amount of interagency coordination required on the majority of applications received.

The procedural changes will be largely transparent to applicants, they will continue to submit their applications exactly as they have in

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the past. Instead of receiving two permits authorizing their work, they will receive a permit (or other appropriate authorization) from the state or local program and a letter from the Corps authorizing the activity under the PGP. Of particular note is the Corps' reliance on the state program for the assessment of mitigation requirements for projects that are eligible for approval under the PGP. Most applicants for such projects will now be able to utilize the monetary contribution provisions contained in CMD's rules and

regulations for mitigation as opposed to designing and implementing an individual mitigation project as currently required by the Corps. As a result, we anticipate being able to significantly reduce permit processing time as well as the confusion and frustration faced by applicants.

Additional information and copies of the PGP can be obtained by contacting Brian Breaux with the Corps at (504) 862-1938 or Rocky Hinds with CMD at (504) 342-7998 or 1-800-267-4019.

Field Course on Wetland Plant Identification

A Wetland Plant Identification course is scheduled for October 6-9, 1998 at the BREC Bluebonnet Nature Center in Baton Rouge. This four-day course will concentrate on field identification of wetland plants. Both coastal and freshwater wetland plants will be included in the class. Tuition for the course is \$650 and includes a course text, handouts, a copy of the "List of Plants That Occur in Wetlands," plant press, transportation to and from field sites, and refreshments. Participants will be responsible for their own travel to and from Baton Rouge and their per diem. Instructors for the course are Professors I. Mendelssohn and R. Chabreck.

For more information, contact Karen Gros, Wetland Biogeochemistry Institute, at (504) 388-8806, fax (504) 388-6423, e-mail: wetlands@premier.net.

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